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## ABSTRACT

To determine land-use patterns nationwide in community colleges, a random sample of 287 two-year colleges in 27 states was surveyed on the following topics: (1) description of the institution; (2) description of the land for the campus including estimation of unusable land; (3) assessment of the various uses of the land as well as an estimate of the annual cost of maintenance and/or improvement; (4) information on the specific uses of income generated by land use; and (5) identification of any problems or barriers encountered by institutions in using land for income purposes. There was a 42% response rate to the survey. Three major types of non-educational program land use were observed: commitment of surplus land to aesthetic or land-bank purposes, dedication of some excess land to public use, and dedication of available portions of land to income purposes. Substantial evidence suggests that the colleges in state systems perceive themselves as restricted to land reserve policies. Few, however, have a thorough or meaningful policy. It is concluded that those institutions which determine that their excess land should be used for community uses or for income uses should develop a comprehensive plan and provide for an overseeing group which can reflect the public interest. The survey questionnaire is appended. (MB)

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LAND-USE: A FINANCIAL RESOURCE  
FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES?

A Report of a National Survey of Land-Use  
Practices of Community Colleges

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## PREFACE

The study reported in this monograph was undertaken because of the absence of any national or even definitive investigation of land-use practices among community colleges. Three broad land-use policies were detected among the respondents, including (1) those which commit surplus land to aesthetic or land-bank purposes; (2) those which have broadened their institutional purpose to dedicate some excess land to public use; and (3) those which have become enterprising by dedicating available portions of land to income purposes.

Millions of dollars might be added to the coffers of the two-year colleges throughout the nation if lands not required for direct educational programs were dedicated to generating income. The attitudes of legislators as well as the public have shifted from an earlier posture that institutional leaders should be protectors of the public domain to a contemporary view that visionary management will pursue enterprising approaches to reduce the taxpayer's burden and to maximize all of the resources of the college.

This report should be of interest to community college presidents and their trustees. It should also

be helpful to state-level policy makers and state directors of community colleges in examining statutory and regulatory provisions related to land-use by the public two-year institutions. In addition to the results of the national survey carried out as part of the study, this monograph also includes a variety of considerations and suggestions to help community colleges develop land-use policies and a comprehensive plan which may well aid some institutions to develop a new resource base for financial support.

This study as well as the monograph report have been produced by the Florida State University Center for State and Regional Leadership which was established originally with support from a grant by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Center is concerned with leadership development and action research which relates to state, regional and national coordination of postsecondary education. Those interested in the Leadership Program or research reports are invited to communicate with the Center Director.

Louis W. Bender  
Center Director

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## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

### The Problem

Presidents of community colleges, as well as the state director in their states, are painfully aware of the scarcity of financial resources to support programs and services of the institution. Much, if not most, of the President's time is spent in search of ways to garner sufficient support to guarantee viable operations. Typically, a great deal of that time is absorbed in concerns related to "FTE generation" for the immediate or subsequent academic term. Additional time is spent in the quest for more efficient management of the existent resources throughout the institution. Budget-making, monitoring, and evaluation represent a daily task of the college president as well as his counterpart at the state level. The programs and agendas of conferences, workshops, or meetings sponsored by national or state organizations reflect the concern of community college management for maximizing programming within the limits of available fiscal resources. Topics deal with effective staffing, facility/equipment usage, program cost analyses, space utilization, and so forth.

Absent from such programs, however, is the topic of land use practices. An assumption of the study to be reported in this monograph was that land use represents a potential resource for financial support to the college which has not been recognized or utilized by the majority of community colleges throughout the nation.

Scope of the Phenomenon: Conservative estimates of the number of acres of land encompassed by community college campuses throughout the United States which are not used directly or indirectly for the educational programs exceed 75,000 acres. If each of these acres were to generate income at averages of agricultural acreage (from \$100 to \$500 and more), community colleges would enjoy an additional revenue of \$7.5 million to \$37.5 million each year. On the other hand, annual grounds maintenance costs per acre may be in the same range depending upon use, climate, etc. Hence, reduction or elimination of \$7.5 to \$37.5 million in such costs would represent further "real" income for the college.

Historic Context: The historic basis for the land-size of community college campuses is vague if even known. It is clear, however, that the "common

knowledge" standard of the 1960s called for a minimum of 100 acres as necessary for the permanent site for all except downtown urban campuses. Such a standard was rooted more in emulating the 4-year college campus model than following any scientifically determined formula. Two-year colleges in the early 1960s often exhibited paranoia in their quest to be recognized as "full-fledged members of higher education". They sought avenues to establish their legitimacy in that arena. Consequently, spacious grounds and buildings befitting academe were sought without realization or appreciation that the public commuter-centered institution was patterning itself after a residency model of the past.

Architects were quick to point out the need for acres of parking space for the commuter college but did not justify accompanying designs predicated more on aesthetic than on utilitarian principles. As most state directors and college presidents recognize, architects generally attempt to insert their own aesthetic dimension whether in the exterior of the building or in the layout of the site. (Perhaps it is their way of seeking immortality by leaving their "footprint in the sands of time.")

### Three Major Types of Land Use

An analysis of uses of land observed among community colleges throughout the nation reveals three different purposes. Their identification suggests a trend or pattern which may be useful to presidents and state directors in re-assessing practices in their own situation.

Protector of Public Domain: The most prevalent purpose in use of land for other than educational program seems to be rooted in the historic origin of the residency model. Where land exceeds the direct requirements for buildings, parking lots, and reasonable buffers of lawn, shrubbery, and walkways, aesthetic uses seem to predominate. Beautiful vistas of manicured lawns provide a sense of open space that communicates a sense of collegiate atmosphere. An examination of the policies and practices related to buildings and grounds at many of these institutions also reflect a posture that the institution must protect land and buildings as part of the public domain consistent with taxpayer/legislator attitudes that good institutional leadership is preservation and protection of such public domain.

The public trust policies of the historic

residential model were modified as "visionary" presidents sought to capitalize upon long-range planning and anticipatory action intended to provide land for future expansion of the institution. Such presidents sense the problems of inflation as well as the opportunities afforded by public support as the institution grew and served large numbers of students in the service area. The land bank policy which thus evolved became viewed as prudent leadership and many colleges today boast large acreage attached to the present campus site or located throughout the service area for future physical facility development.

Changing Times-Public Use Purposes: As the largesse of the golden decade of the 1960s surrendered to the stable-state realities of the mid 1970s, new value systems began to press upon the two-year college. The community service concept brought about a 180 degree change from the psychology of the residency model whereby the campus was restricted to limited educational purposes and thus not available for use or abuse by the general public. The new concept called upon the community college to make its facilities "truly public" by being open for public use. The padlocks protecting tennis courts, gymnasiums,

auditoriums, and other space of the two-year college were replaced with policies providing for legitimate organizations to utilize space and facilities which tax monies had procured. It soon became evident that such a posture was politically wise since those people using the campus were, in most cases, eligible voters whose good experience on the campus of the college might well be reflected by their ballot at the polls.

Contemporary Times-Income Use Purposes: As resources became even more restricted during the recession of the 1970s, state and institutional leaders of two-year colleges began to examine yet a new concept. In spite of the historic tradition and concomitant attitude that a public institution should depend primarily, if not only, upon public support, an attitude emerged whereby increasing numbers of colleges began to assume the view that they were charged with husbanding the resources advanced from public coffers much as the Biblical charge of adding to the talents had been given. The result has been the emergence of a small but identifiable trend of public two-year colleges to use their land to generate income which may be added to the support base of the institution

or serve as a supplement to the sponsor or student body, or become a reserve to accommodate unanticipated events. It may well be that the California experience with Proposition 13 will also accelerate this emerging trend whereby state directors will examine legislative and regulative provisions to eliminate obstacles and add incentives for income-generating land use. Community college presidents, as well, are beginning to re-examine their philosophy, policies, and practices of land use.

#### The Design of This Study

The methodology employed for this study can be classified as descriptive survey. A survey instrument was developed (see Appendix) and sent to a random sample of two-year institutions in twenty-seven states listed in the 1977 COMMUNITY, JUNIOR, AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE DIRECTORY, and published by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. The instrument was designed after a review of the literature and an analysis of site and facility reports from seven different states. The sample of states included in the study were selected to cover all of the regional

Accrediting Association regions. No attempt was made in advance to identify those states having land use practices and therefore a limitation of the study is its dependence upon randomness. Each state director might have been canvassed by telephone prior to the survey as a selective way to identify institutions having land-use practices for public use or income purposes. However, it was felt additional insights into land-use practices might be found by the random approach and, politically, it was recognized that individual institutions might have land-use practices which were not completely acceptable or understood at the state level in some cases.

The Instrument: Five areas of information were solicited in the survey instrument. The first sought a description of the institution and called upon the respondent college to complete a separate form for each campus where a multi-campus institution existed. The second part requested a description of the land for the campus. The college was asked to exclude any land that might be owned by the institution which was not considered part of the campus complex in view of the fact some institutions may have been the recipients of bequeathed lands or facilities by a

donor which were intended from the beginning as income generating. This study sought to examine land uses and policies for that which would be included in the direct acreage of the college campus. In this section, the responding institution was asked to estimate that acreage which would be classified as unusable because of swamp, rock ledges or similar negative terrain.

The third area covered in the survey included an assessment of the various uses of the land as well as an estimate of the annual cost of maintenance and/or improvement. In addition, institutions were asked to identify both the type and operational management for any income use land reported. The fourth area sought to elicit more information on the specific uses of the income generated by such land use. This cost analysis revealed how income would be used by the college as well as an identification of the governance and operational structure used by the institution.

The final section solicited identification of any problems or barriers encountered by institutions in using land for income purposes. It was expected that state regulations as well as local attitudes might be factors inhibiting income land use.

Procedure: The procedure called for a simple

mail-out to the institutions selected from the AACJC DIRECTORY as previously described. No follow-up attempt was made.

Analysis: The analysis of policies sent by respondent institutions followed content analysis methodology. The analysis of responses to questions on the survey instrument was carried out by a simple tabular procedure as well as an examination of the reports of institutions against known governance, student enrollment and related knowledge of that institution.

## SECTION II. SURVEY RESULTS

### Respondents

The survey instrument (Appendix I) was mailed to 287 two-year colleges on May 1, 1978. The colleges were located in twenty-seven different states throughout the country. Institutions were requested to send their return on or before May 31, 1978. No follow-up effort was proposed and none was carried out. As reported in Summary TABLE A, 119 institutions responded for a 42% return rate. There was at least one response from each of the twenty-seven states canvassed.

Institutions were asked to identify the total number of acres of the college campus and then to report the acreage and percentage of the total directly required/used for educational program, including an estimate of reasonable buffer for shrubbery, lawn, and pathways. Eight institutions which reported 100% of their acreage was directly used for the educational program were eliminated from further study and analysis. In addition, five other respondents yielded unusable returns, in three cases because the college had no permanent facilities and in two cases because of college policy not to respond to surveys.

TABLE A

## NATIONAL LAND-USE SURVEY SUMMARY

| (27)<br>States | # Sur-<br>veyed | #<br>Resp. | # Land<br>Avail. | # Have<br>Land<br>Policy | Aesth<br>Use | Land<br>Bank<br>Res. | Public<br>Use | Income | St. Law/<br>Regs.<br>Barrier |
|----------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|--------|------------------------------|
| Alabama        | 15              | 5          | 4                | 2                        | 2            | 1                    | 1             |        | 3                            |
| Alaska         | 8               | 4          | 3                |                          | 3            |                      |               |        |                              |
| Arizona        | 5               | 4          | 4                | 3                        | 1            | 1                    | 1             | 1      |                              |
| Arkansas       | 6               | 2          | 2                |                          | 1            |                      | 1             |        | 1                            |
| California     | 33              | 7          | 5                | 2                        | 2            | 1                    | 1             | 1      | 2                            |
| Colorado       | 8               | 3          | 3                | 1                        |              | 1                    | 2             |        | 1                            |
| Florida        | 23              | 15         | 11               |                          | 3            | 2                    | 3             | 3      | 2                            |
| Illinois       | 19              | 4          | 3                |                          |              |                      | 2             | 1      | 1                            |
| Iowa           | 11              | 3          | 3                |                          |              |                      |               | 3      |                              |
| Kentucky       | 12              | 4          | 4                |                          | 3            | 1                    |               |        | 3                            |
| Kansas         | 12              | 2          | 2                |                          | 1            |                      |               | 1      |                              |
| Maryland       | 10              | 6          | 6                | 1                        | 4            | 1                    |               | 1      |                              |
| Massachusetts  | 7               | 3          | 3                | 1                        | 3            |                      |               |        | 3                            |
| Michigan       | 10              | 6          | 4                | 1                        |              | 1                    | 1             | 2      |                              |
| Minnesota      | 9               | 6          | 6                | 1                        | 1            | 2                    | 3             |        | 4                            |
| Mississippi    | 6               | 2          | 2                | 1                        |              | 1                    |               | 1      |                              |
| Missouri       | 3               | 1          | 1                |                          | 1            |                      |               |        |                              |
| Nebraska       | 4               | 2          | 2                |                          |              |                      |               | 2      |                              |
| New Jersey     | 8               | 2          | 2                |                          | 2            |                      |               |        | 1                            |
| New York       | 15              | 8          | 8                |                          | 3            | 3                    | 1             | 1*     |                              |
| No. Carolina   | 18              | 12         | 12               | 2                        | 4            | 2                    | 3             | 3      | 1                            |
| Oregon         | 5               | 1          | 1                |                          | 1            |                      |               |        |                              |
| Pennsylvania   | 6               | 3          | 3                |                          | 1            | 1                    |               | 1**    |                              |
| So. Carolina   | 10              | 6          | 4                |                          |              | 3                    |               | 1      | 2                            |
| Texas          | 10              | 2          | 2                |                          | 2            |                      |               |        |                              |
| Virginia       | 8               | 4          | 4                |                          | 4            |                      |               |        | 3                            |
| Washington     | 6               | 2          | 2                |                          | 2            |                      |               |        |                              |
| TOTALS         | 287             | 119        | 106              | 15                       | 44           | 21                   | 19            | 22     | 27                           |

\* Leased to non-profit Nature Center.

\*\* Former land owner farms by "gentlemen's agreement".

Therefore, a total of 106 institutions reporting some acreage available after direct educational program use were included in the results being reported. Since multi-campus districts were asked to complete a separate form for each campus, 122 different campuses are represented in the 106 college districts as shown in TABLE B.

TABLE B  
NATIONAL LAND-USE SURVEY  
Acreage By Purpose

(106 Respondent Colleges Encompassing 122 Campuses)

| Campuses | Total Acreage | Educ. Use, Only | Unusable (Swampy. etc.) | Avail. for other Uses | Public Use | Income Use |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| 73       | 8,997         | 4,403           | 940                     | 3,654                 |            |            |
| 25       | 3,055         | 1,503           | 518                     | 1,034                 | 660        |            |
| 24       | 4,237         | 2,035           | 249                     | 1,953                 |            | 1,882      |
| Totals   | 16,289        | 7,941           | 1,707                   | 6,641                 | 660        | 1,882      |

#### Available Land

The reader should be cautioned at this point that all acreage figures reported admittedly are estimates. Observation of the returns reveals some extremes in estimates which would need to be examined if statistical applications were being made. For example, an institution reporting a total college acreage of 165 acres might report 120 of those acres directly used for the educational program. Another institution reporting 78 acres total might indicate 35 acres are directly used for the educational program. When contrasting the total enrollments for both institutions as reported in the AACJC DIRECTORY, however, one might find that the former would have a student population of less than 500 while the latter might have an enrollment in excess of 6,000. Obviously, it would be impossible to have agreement from all respondents on what represents a "reasonable buffer for shrubbery, lawn, pathways, etc." This was the case with each of the 8 colleges eliminated from analysis because they reported 100% of their acreage was needed directly for the educational program.

A breakdown of total acreage can be found in TABLE B. The respondents (representing slightly less

than 10% of the AACJC public institutional membership) reported a total of 16,289 acres. Respondents indicated that approximately 49% or 7,941 acres of this total were directly used for the educational program (the caution noted above applies here). A total of 1,707 acres (10.5%) was judged as unusable because of swamp, rock, or similar negative terrain by the respondents. The remaining 6,641 acres (or 40.5% of the total) was judged as available or could be made available for various land-use purposes.

#### Aesthetic Or Land Bank Use

Forty-four of the institutions responding reported that their excess available acreage over and above that used for educational program was dedicated to an aesthetic purpose only ( see TABLE A). Further analysis of this group reveals a number of interesting observations.

#### Possible Influences of State Governance Structure:

While many states are represented among the respondents reporting aesthetic use only, all respondents in the states of Alaska, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas, Virginia, and Washington reported aesthetic use only for their excess land. Kentucky would be in the same

category except for one of the four responding institutions which reported its excess land is dedicated to a land bank reserve. It is interesting to note that a state-level board of control exists as a governance structure in all but two of those states. Furthermore, as will be discussed later, in four of those states having a state-level governance structure respondents reported barriers or problems encountered in use of land for income came from state legislation or regulation. It might well be that the state systems perceive it inappropriate to generate income from state lands, even if it is to increase the fiscal base for the educational program or to benefit the public coffers where income might revert to the general fund.

Twenty-one additional respondent institutions reported their excess land as being held in reserve as a land bank. The acreage involved is 1,302 acres or approximately one third of the 4,099 total for both purposes.

Maintenance Costs: The study attempted to determine the annual cost of maintenance or improvement of lands held by institutions not directly used for educational program. Many of the respondents failed

to include such estimates, however. Among those who did report, some estimated it cost the institution nothing because the land is wooded or virgin terrain. Estimates then progressed upward to annual costs of from \$200 an acre reported by an Arkansas institution to \$4,900 an acre reported by a California institution for aesthetic purposes usage. While it might be assumed that the land bank acreage would cost nothing, one institution in Michigan reported an annual cost of \$30,000 for maintenance and improvement of 5.6 acres held as reserve in a land bank. The modal cost for aesthetic acreage among the respondents was \$200 per acre.

#### Public Use Acreage

Twenty-five campuses have some portion of their land dedicated to public use. A total of 660 acres was reported dedicated to such purposes as nature trails, parks, recreational areas, lakes, and woods. Nature trails averaged 4 acres and the estimated costs of maintenance and improvement averaged \$1,000. Averages for both parks and recreational areas are not possible since the ranges were so extreme. One North Carolina institution reported a two-acre park while

another institution reported a 2.8 acre recreational area. The largest park reported was 27.4 acres of a Pennsylvania institution while a 30 acre recreational area was reported by a Kentucky college. Maintenance and improvement costs range from \$60 to \$500 annually per acre. Several of the institutions reported that a community agency absorbs such costs for the recreational program of the community.

The survey did not solicit information on the date colleges established their public use acreages. Since 14 of the 44 aesthetic use respondents included comments that they plan to establish future public use acreages, the investigator was led to believe such use is relatively new and is just now emerging. An interesting case study of an Alabama junior college public use project is reported in Section III, p.26.

#### Income Uses

As reported in TABLES A and B earlier, twenty-two respondent institutions reported twenty-four campuses dedicating 1,882 acres to income purposes. The predominate usage pattern is for the institution to lease land for agricultural use. Specifically, eight respondents reported acreage dedicated to crops of

soybeans, corn, wheat or rye; four reported acreage dedicated to hay or pasture. Four different institutions reported citrus groves while three other institutions reported orchards but did not specify the specific crop. One California institution reported a vineyard for a total of twenty of the twenty-four respondents using land for agricultural purposes. The other reported uses include lease of several hundred acres of woodlands to a non-profit nature center in New York; lease of six acres for a cable TV station and tower in North Carolina; lease of 8.69 acres for a "low incidence handicapped school" in Illinois; and lease of a 69 acre golf course by a community college in Michigan.

Use of Income: Not all institutions reported how the income realized is used. Of those who did report, however, most (8 colleges) use the income as operating reserve while one reported using it in the regular operating budget. Three institutions use the income for their educational program and two others use the money for scholarships or loans for students. Two other institutions reported that the income is used for capital reserve.

In several cases, institutions encouraged student

groups to use existing orange groves or orchards as a means for enhancing their financial coffers. An Arizona institution permits its Agriculture Club to pick and sell the citrus from 15 acres and then use the funds for club activities. A community college in Florida permits its baseball team to pick the citrus to support its athletic program.

Governance: The study was concerned with the governance structure used for policy oversight and financial operations of income-generating land. Originally, it was hypothesized that many institutions would find it necessary to establish a separate governance structure such as a foundation or non-profit corporation in order to avoid complications with state law or regulation. Again, not all respondents completed that section of the questionnaire but nine reported such operations are treated the same as other aspects of college operation while four reported separate treatment as a self-supporting auxiliary enterprise. Interestingly, none of the 24 institutions using land for income reported a separate foundation or non-profit corporation structure. This is particularly interesting in view of the response of the total survey to the question of problems or barriers encountered by colleges

in using land for income. As can be seen by reviewing TABLE A, twenty-seven (representing 25% of all reporting land available) indicated they encountered barriers to land use for income because of state legislation or regulation. Yet, of the thirteen states represented in that response, eight states had no institutions using land for income. It may be, therefore, that the foundation or non-profit corporation governance structure is a viable strategy for achieving land use for income in many states.

Another significant impediment to land use for income may be the institutional perception that it is already too involved and further operations would distract management from its primary operational responsibilities. A clue to this possibility may be the fact that only four of the institutions generating income from land use are involved in the direct operation of the enterprise ( all four managed or farmed acreage for income). All other income enterprise was operated on a lease basis. The other exception, of course, would be those institutions reported earlier which permit student groups to pick citrus from existent citrus groves.

Policies for Land Use: One of the more startling

findings of the study was the fact only fifteen institutions reported having a "formal" land policy. Some of these fifteen respondents use land for income while others do not. When analyzing the specific policies reported, however, it becomes clear few have actually developed any meaningful or comprehensive land-use policy.

One-sentence policies reported by those not using land for income reflected positions such as:

All land and facilities of this institution should be dedicated to education purposes only.

Our Master Plan shows the ultimate development for our campus.

The Campus Master Plan calls for additional buildings to be constructed.

Excess land is used in the agricultural instruction program only.

Playing field and lawns are available to the public.

As a public institution,---- is dedicated to the aesthetic enrichment of the community.

To be used for non-profit educational purposes only.

Land will be maintained for future campus expansion and used for recreation and other public uses in the meantime.

All unused land is maintained according to good forestry practices and is used only for outdoor nature activities by the College.

Among the policy statements reported by respondents having income-producing lands, the following policies were reported:

Income derived from all land shall be used to enhance the educational program at ----.

All farming operations must be consistent with the school curriculum and with good soil conservation practices.

Land will be leased to farmers for agricultural purposes only.

The College's policy is to till all arable land.

The land for the College was given by the County with restrictions that none be sold or used for non-college purposes.

The 75 acres not presently used are rented for agricultural production with all rental fees going to the County.

A review of such policies would certainly lead to the conclusion that two-year colleges would be wise to develop comprehensive land-use policies. This view is discussed in some detail in SECTION III.

### SECTION III. OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

#### Attitudes Toward Land-Use

While a relatively inclusive literature exists on fiscal implications of use or management of facilities and equipment, there is a dearth of writing on land-use policies or practices. As observed in the introduction of this report, historic tradition and the attitudes of public enterprise may be contributory to this state of affairs. As mentioned in the last section, it may also be due to a perception (on the part of the management of two-year colleges) that involvement in land-use for income purposes would add unduly to the workload of already heavily-burdened administrators. And, of course, many administrators perceive the existence of negative attitudes by local board or local businessmen who are critical of competition generated by any internal enterprise of the college.

Public sentiment, as reflected in the Proposition 13 experience of California, however, may be shifting. Perceptive public two-year colleges will want to assess the attitude prevalent in their service area toward the self-help ethic. This ethic has proven very

persuasive in some regions when depending upon support from the general public. An institution which is able to demonstrate it has pursued every possible avenue before turning to its local tax base can, in some regions, rally the support of a previously conservative sector. Short of income-generating uses, the same tactic can gain support where a college has become recognized for its philosophy and policy of making land available for public use purposes. In this regard, the community-based two-year institution is clearly different from the residency model represented by the baccalaureate institution described in the introductory section.

#### Ideas For Public Use of Land

This study found public uses of land predominantly centered upon development of nature trails or jogging paths open to the general public. There were surprisingly few institutions which had considered using their excess land as a public park or recreational area. There were even fewer institutions which had established cooperative relationships with other community agencies in using the land for a public good. Yet, a large number of the institutions in this survey reported tracts of woodland while others reported lakes

or land along rivers.

An interesting case study is a two-year junior college in Alabama which built a golf course for public use. That institution serves a three-county area which is predominantly rural and whose economic level would be below the national average. The President of that institution gave leadership to the project which resulted in construction of an 18-hole golf course at a cost of approximately \$20,000 which was paid through local gifts and donations. Fifty-three acres of the 152 acre site were used for this purpose. The President secured voluntary services during the planning, design, and layout stages of the golf course utilizing a golf pro and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He subsequently arranged for earth-moving equipment and personnel to be donated by a local military installation during the construction stage. The result was a beautiful golf course boasting a pond serving as a water barrier and many mature pine trees which were left standing in a predominantly level area now transformed into rolling terrain. A gifts campaign included soliciting, during several weeks following Christmas, sets of golf clubs from residents who had received a new set as a Christmas gift. This was done

as a public service ad carried by the local cable TV station. Reportedly, quite a few sets were received through that TV ad campaign which reminded potential donors of the tax benefit which would accrue through their generosity.

Construction of a golf course for public use might seem rather frivolous or the result of an ardent golfer-president using his office to give vent to his favorite past pastime. When one confers privately with the President of that predominantly white Alabama junior college, however, one learns of another purpose of the golf course. The President points out their three-county service area boasts a number of golf courses but all are part of a private club. As a consequence, golf is not available to the black community which makes up a large percentage of the total population of that region. Therefore, that President has cleverly created a community service which is significant and reflective of the highest ideals espoused in the community college philosophy. Low greens fees cover the costs of maintenance and operation and the College has made it available for tournaments by surrounding high school athletic departments, thus enhancing the image of the college and

aiding in student recruitment as well.

In most instances, colleges want to maintain the general character of the area even when seeking income uses of the land. An analysis of the immediate region together with the best land uses for terrain, climatic conditions, and community attitudes can then be developed. For example, a college in New Jersey has talked about the desirability of generating income but hesitates to use any of its 150 acre plus campus site because of its suburban area locale. Brainstorming sessions have revealed a number of viable alternatives for income generating land use. One strategy calls for planting 5-acre plots with Christmas tree seedlings over a 7 to 10 year period so that a cycle is established whereby the institution can harvest five acres of Christmas trees annually while having a permanent section of the campus meet its requirements of aesthetics. A second strategy calls for initiating a turf-selling business which has a natural market in that growing suburban area. The college presently incurs considerable costs to maintain lawns, thus it could realize a double benefit by identifying a portion of the campus to use as a turf farm. The third strategy called for the college to develop a peach orchard which

would be consistent with an agricultural emphasis of that area. There are undoubtedly other viable strategies; however, the first question is whether an institution wants to use some of its excess land to generate income. It should also be recognized that any of the alternatives described above could be done on a lease basis to an external operator or could be carried out by direct management from the college.

#### Overcoming Lack Of Funds

One of the barriers or obstacles encountered in developing land reported in this study was lack of funds which confronts most all institutions. As illustrated in the case study of the golf course in Alabama, there are alternative approaches whereby an institution can overcome costs of development. For land-use projects, a college will frequently find various community agencies ready to collaborate either by providing funds or services. Numerous civic clubs or organizations seek a worthy project each year toward which to focus their efforts and energies. Use of student groups as an extension of the educational program has proven effective in some institutions when developing nature trails or picnic facilities/park areas

to be used by the citizenry of the region. Still other institutions have found it effective to call upon local artisans and businessmen who willingly donate services and/or materials for the public good. Two-year colleges have only begun to utilize the voluntarism ethic of Americans which not only provides the product of directed efforts but also generates a sense of personal pride or ownership on the part of the donor.

Many colleges have used federal monies, particularly those provided by the Comprehensive Education and Training Act (CETA). A variety of federal programs concerned with conservation, environment, flood control, and even energy can be used to support costs of labor in land development where public use is the objective.

Use of military cooperation and assistance is another viable means for land development. The Army Corps of Engineers can be used for planning and engineering specifications resulting in considerable savings to the institution. The same free services are frequently realized through state agencies concerned with conservation, forest and waters development, or agricultural demonstrations where such a project is consistent with the goals of the agency while serving

objectives of the college.

**Needed: A Comprehensive Plan**

Many colleges are becoming increasingly interested in the possibility of income-generating uses for their excess lands. To accomplish such a purpose, however, the institution should take some time to determine the implications of such a goal as well as to develop a comprehensive plan which will guide the institution and assure community acceptance.

Philosophy: To begin with, it is essential that a philosophy of land use and income use be developed. Why does the institution want to generate income? Who will be the benefactors? How will the proceeds be used? How does such land use complement the mission of the institution?

In many cases the president of the college will want to use a committee or task force to answer these questions and to formulate a philosophy of land use whether it be to enhance aesthetics through a land reserve policy or to provide a community service through developing land for general public use or to increase the financial support base of the institution by generating income. Such a non-partisan task force

will protect the college against negative attitudes embraced by those who would perceive competition to their business or related interests. The brainstorming of such a task force group will also tend to reveal a variety of strategies for land use for consideration by the college.

Governance: It is important for the college to examine state legislation and regulation to determine whether a special governance structure will be needed or whether the college can accomplish its objectives within the present governance arrangement. Many public four-year institutions generating income from land have found it expedient to develop a separate non-profit corporation for that purpose. Such was not the finding of this study, however.

Provision for some kind of representative advisory or policy-making group would be desirable. It would assure a public posture that the income enterprise is undertaken in behalf of the total community rather than to benefit the president or a select few. Furthermore, whenever a business enterprise is involved, unforeseen circumstances develop which are better addressed by a policy-formulating group where the public interest is concerned.

Program: There are a number of criteria which should guide the institution in determining the land-use program. First, it is critical that it be consistent with the area as well as the attitudes of the citizenry itself. Second, any land-use project should be capable of becoming a model or exemplary practice. The college should not undertake any enterprise which would be marginal or might subsequently be judged to be mediocre by the public. If the project is agricultural in nature and is to be operated by the institution, the college should be sure that its personnel are capable of producing the best practices which will be worthy of emulation throughout the region. A third criteria for the program should be that it relate to the mission of the college. Finally, any program of land-use should contribute, never deter from the educational program of the college. These criteria can guide the planning or philosophy task force at the earliest stages of exploration of land-use strategies.

Operations/Finance: Before any decision is made to dedicate some of the college's land for income use, and before any public announcement is made, a thorough analysis of the requirements of development,

operations, and long-term maintenance must be made. Direct and indirect costs of capital investment during the development stages must be determined. Sources of such capital investment need to be identified as well as verified. Furthermore, if the institution intends to operate its own program, an estimate of the potential deficit during the initial years of operations must be made. Few businesses are able to realize a profit at the end of the initial year or two. Finally, the college will want to protect itself by providing that an independent audit of income generating operations will be carried out each year.

#### Summary

Many two-year colleges hold excess land over and above that required for the educational program of the institution. An examination of the land-use practices in this national survey suggests that community colleges can be grouped according to three distinct land-use philosophies. At one end of the continuum can be found the historic philosophy that public domain lands should be protected by a responsible chief administrator. Thus land-bank or land-reserve practices which seek to provide an aesthetic dimension to the campus are the predominant pattern observed here.

Progressing along the continuum and occupying the central position at the present time is the emerging community service concept that excess land should be developed for public use. The number of institutions which have developed nature trails, jogging paths, picnic areas, parks, and so forth come under this classification. Occupying the other extreme end of the continuum is the contemporary, and perhaps emerging, policy of using excess lands for income to the college. Such a policy is consistent with the contemporary view of the public that tax-supported organizations must do everything in their power to reduce the burden on the taxpayer.

The national survey carried out as part of this study evidences the absence of awareness on the part of many colleges that land is a resource which should be examined for appropriate use. Similarly, an absence of knowledge of the specific state requirements for land-use was also revealed in the study. It would appear that the governing boards of state systems of community colleges should especially examine their philosophy and regulations regarding land use practices. There was substantial evidence to suggest that two-year colleges in state systems perceive themselves

as restricted to land reserve/land bank policies. Perhaps, too, individual institutions should re-examine their myopic view that they will not extend themselves to use land for income where such funds would revert to the general fund of the state and not directly benefit the institution itself.

An examination of the land-use policies reported by the respondents of this national survey reveals that few, if any, actually have a thorough or meaningful policy. It is equally clear that such land-use policy is needed even by those institutions which will continue to dedicate their excess lands to aesthetic or land bank purposes.

Finally, those institutions which determine that their excess land should be used for community service public uses or for income uses should develop a comprehensive plan beginning with a philosophy and providing for an oversight group which can not only reflect the public interest but be a buffer between the institution and those in the community who would object to perceived competition by the college with enterprising interests within the community. If each institution were to develop such a comprehensive plan and the potential for income generation were to be

determined, millions of dollars could be added to the support of two-year colleges throughout the country.

APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



## National Survey of Land-Use Practices in Two Year Colleges

Your cooperation and assistance is sincerely requested in order that we may provide a comprehensive report on land-use policies and practices throughout the nation. Our primary concern is that land which is not typically used for the educational mission of the college. In many cases, this land serves only an aesthetic, buffer, or land reserve function. Frequently, such land consumes much needed dollars for maintenance and upkeep. This study is being undertaken in the spirit of sharing successful ideas and practices for the use of such lands to serve a public good or even generate an income for the institution. Every institution that returns this survey will be eligible to receive a copy of the written report.

Please complete the items below, and return the survey form to:

Dr. Louis W. Bender, Director  
State & Regional Higher Education Center  
Suite 107 Stone Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306

### I. Institutional Description:

- 1) Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Location: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Single Campus \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Multi Campus \_\_\_\_\_ If multi campus, please complete a separate form for each campus. The following campuses are described on attached forms:  
    (a) \_\_\_\_\_,  
    (b) \_\_\_\_\_, (c) \_\_\_\_\_,  
    (d) \_\_\_\_\_, (Use reverse side if needed).
- 6) Administrative person responsible for oversight of campus use:  
    Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Campus Land Description:

It is the purpose of this study to determine the use of all land directly part of the campus complex not occupied by buildings or related physical facilities (such as parking lots, athletic fields, etc.) used primarily and regularly for the educational program of the college. Therefore, we wish a description of land making up the campus which includes: (a) that portion and location of land used directly for the day to day educational program and (b) that portion which remains. If you feel a further description is necessary, please use the reverse side. If possible, include a campus map or diagram. (Also note, if you are not sure of the exact acreage, please estimate. If you prefer to report in square feet, please so indicate so that our final figures will correlate.)

- 7) Total acreage of college campus: \_\_\_\_\_ acres.
- 8) Percent of total acreage directly used for educational program (include reasonable buffer for shrubbery, lawn, pathways): \_\_\_\_\_% (\_\_\_\_\_ acres).
- 9) Percent of total acreage which is unusable because of swamp, rock, or similar negative terrain: \_\_\_\_\_% (\_\_\_\_\_ acres).
- 10) Remaining percentage of acreage available (or could be made available for various land use purposes): \_\_\_\_\_% (\_\_\_\_\_ acres).
- 11) This college (or campus) \_\_\_\_\_ does, \_\_\_\_\_ does not, have a land-use policy related to (10) above.  
(If a land use policy does exist, please state that policy below or enclose a copy). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## III. Land Use of that portion of campus reported in (10) above:

- 12) Please estimate the number of acres used for the following purposes and related costs/income:

|                           | <u>Acres</u> | <u>Annual Cost of<br/>Maintenance/<br/>Improvement</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| (a) Aesthetic only:       | _____        | \$ _____                                               |
| (b) Land bank or reserve: | _____        | _____                                                  |
| (c) Public uses:          |              |                                                        |
| Nature Trails             | _____        | _____                                                  |
| Parks                     | _____        | _____                                                  |
| Recreational Areas        | _____        | _____                                                  |

|                                                                            | <u>Acres</u> | <u>Annual Cost of<br/>Maintenance/<br/>Improvement</u> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Public Use Buildings<br>(please explain): _____<br>_____<br>_____          | _____        | \$ _____                                               |
| Special Events Use<br>(amphitheatre, Lake,<br>etc) _____<br>_____<br>_____ | _____        | _____                                                  |

(d) Income uses (Please add to list as necessary)

\_\_\_\_\_ acres leased for agricultural use  
(Type crops: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ acres college farms for income  
(Type crops: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ acres leased for recreational use, income generating  
(Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ acres college managed for recreational use, income  
generating  
(Specify \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ acres leased for other purposes  
(Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ acres college managed for other income generating  
purposes  
(Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ Other income uses  
(Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

(e) Future Use Plans: Please describe any firm plans for  
future use of land in either Public Use (c) or Income Use  
(d) categories, including an estimate of the number of  
acres involved.

Future Public Use Plans: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Future Income Use Plans: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: If your college does not use any land for income purposes  
(hence (d) above will be blank), please skip to item V:  
Problems Related to Income Land Use.

IV. Income Use:

13) This question is concerned with all land used for income whether by lease or by college operation. Be assured that confidentiality will be honored and no dollar figures published. Gross total figures for this study will not reveal any individual college/campus.

(a) Please estimate the total capital investment of the college directly related to the income generating land use reported in 12-d above \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

(b) What sources were used to secure capital funds:

\_\_\_\_\_ state, \_\_\_\_\_ federal, \_\_\_\_\_ community,  
\_\_\_\_\_ college foundation, \_\_\_\_\_ other foundation,  
\_\_\_\_\_ lenders, \_\_\_\_\_ donors (Please explain):  
\_\_\_\_\_

(c) What is the annual cost of maintaining or operating the income producing land \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

(d) What is the estimated annual net income from this land use \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

(e) For what purposes is this income used:

\_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship/Loans  
\_\_\_\_\_ Student Activities/Programs  
\_\_\_\_\_ Athletics  
\_\_\_\_\_ Educational Program  
\_\_\_\_\_ Operating Reserve  
\_\_\_\_\_ Capital Reserve  
\_\_\_\_\_ Returned to State \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ Lender  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

14) Please indicate the governance structure for policy, oversight, and financial operations of income use land.

\_\_\_\_\_ (a) Same as all other aspects of college operation with funds used as part of general funds.

\_\_\_\_\_ (b) Same governance as college but treated separately as auxiliary self-supporting project.

\_\_\_\_\_ (c) Separate governance: \_\_\_\_\_ foundation, \_\_\_\_\_ non-profit corporation, \_\_\_\_\_ other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (d) State dictated and regulated operation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (e) Other (Please explain): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## V. Problems Related to Income Land Uses:

- 15) Please identify any problems or barriers encountered by your college in use of land for income. (Whether you use land for income or not).

☐ State legislation/regulation  
☐ Other regulatory agencies  
☐ Local Board Attitudes  
☐ Perceived competition to local business  
☐ Costs.... Lack of funds  
☐ Philosophical Reasons  
☐ Climate  
☐ Other (Please explain): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## VI. Reports of This Study:

☐ Check if you would be interested in a copy of this study of land use practices reported throughout the country and indicate the name and address to which the report should be mailed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Person Reporting

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number

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